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The Highlander

Thursday **January 21 2021** | Issue 474

INSIDE: CATCHING UP WITH MATT DUCHENE PAGE 17

FREE



Cary Brown rides his bicycle in the snow in Minden Hills Jan. 16. See more photos on page 19.
Photo by Lisa Gervais.

Students seek help with slow internet

By Joseph Quigley
Local Journalism Initiative
Reporter

When the pandemic closed schools in 2020, student Megan Klose nonetheless found herself travelling to the Haliburton Highlands Secondary School parking lot.

Online learning proved challenging with their family's internet quality. To make do, they utilized the school's WiFi hotspot, with her mother – a teacher – working from the front seat and Klose taking a class from the back. "My family faced significant disadvantages because of our internet connection," Klose said.

County council heard that and other stories of connection problems from a delegation headed by Point in Time Jan. 13. The organization is seeking financial support to help students struggling to learn due to a lack of online connectivity.

Point in Time executive director Marg Cox said it is an issue affecting approximately 150 children and youth in the County. She highlighted a survey they conducted with 59 local youth, with only 14 per cent reporting they had reliable internet and 54 per cent reporting having less-than-unlimited data.

"We're really mounting a campaign focused on, are you in for internet in Haliburton County," Cox said.

The group presented two policy goals: long-term solutions to connectivity barriers and short-term

Continued 'Not' on page 2

Courts convict no one over 2020 drug busts

HIGHLANDER INVESTIGATES

By Lisa Gervais

A backlogged court system, exacerbated by COVID-19, has stalled the cases of locals charged in major drug busts in 2020.

Of the 24 Haliburton County residents charged after the execution of major drug warrants in 2020, 16 are still before the courts, two have had their charges withdrawn and another three have seen their

charges stayed. The court office could not provide information on the remaining three cases.

There has only been one case resolved in favour of the Crown, a 38-year-old Haliburton man pleading guilty Dec. 10, 2020, with sentencing scheduled for Feb. 8, 2021.

A Ministry of the Attorney General spokesperson told *The Highlander* Dec. 23, 2020 that "it would be inappropriate

to comment on matters that are before the Court."

The charges withdrawn or stayed were revealed by a Lindsay courthouse update of matters handled in the Minden court, provided by the ministry's office.

Charges are stayed when a judge or a Crown decides that it would be bad for the justice system for the case to continue. This means the issue of guilt or innocence is never determined. It was not

Continued 'Some' on page 14



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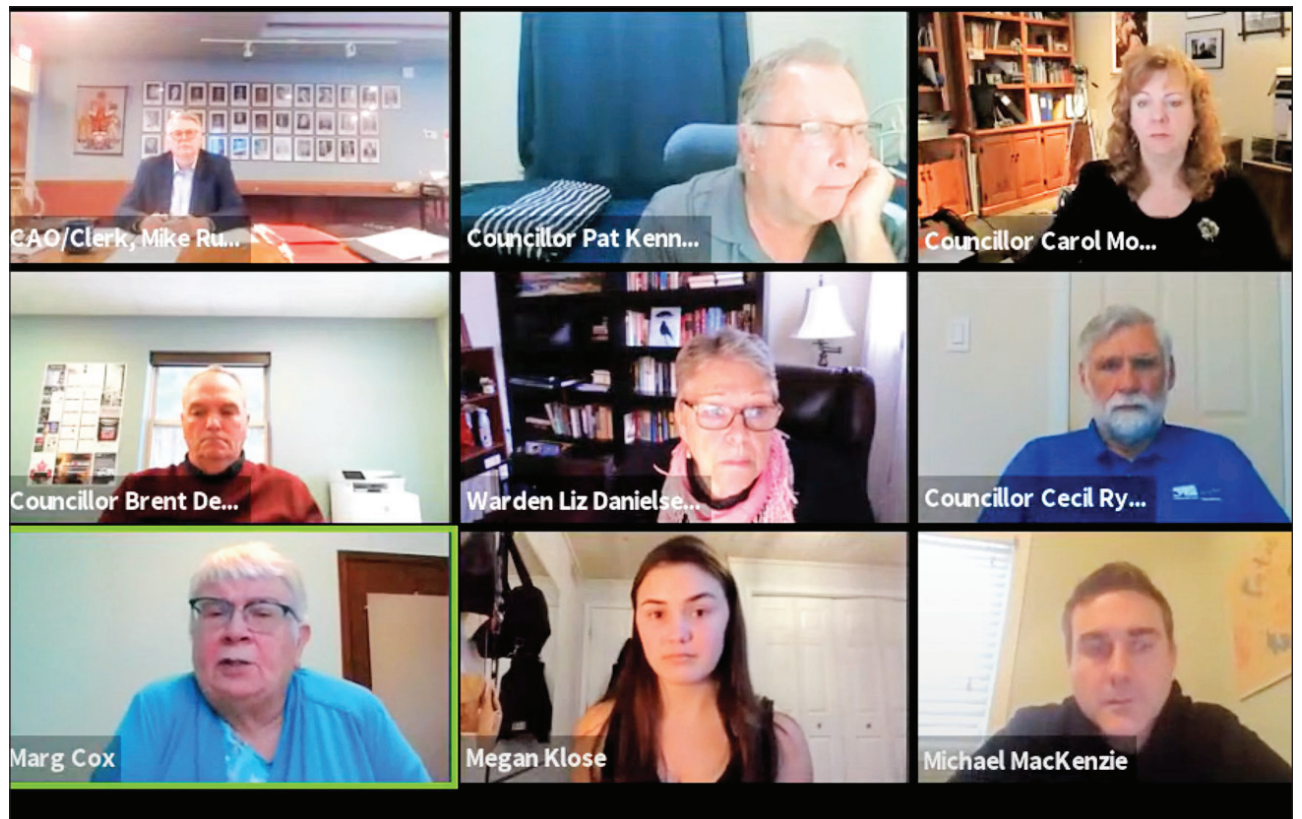
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A delegation presented to County council about youth connectivity Jan. 13. Photo by Joseph Quigley.

'Not fair to students' who can't connect

Continued from page 1
solutions for youth in urgent need. For the short-term, they offered ideas like cellular data plans or hubs, increasing community access point alternatives, and meeting the transportation needs of those who cannot get to hotspots.

County-born McGill University professor Michael Mackenzie said the issue is impacting many students, but not evenly.

"The existing disparities have really widened for those most in need of connection," MacKenzie said. "Both to educational opportunities and to supportive services during COVID ... Being connected is critical for the

development, health and wellbeing of youth."

Coun. Andrea Roberts praised the presentation and asked about the Ministry of Education's responsibility to address the issue. Cox said the group is interested in working with all levels of government.

"We're very concerned that if we wait for provincial intervention that the youth in our County will be losing credits," Cox said. "We concur that we feel that we'd really like to see the Ministry of Education stepping up here. But in lieu of that, we feel we still need to move forward."

Cox said public hotspots are

important, but there are hurdles such as ensuring they are robust enough to handle an increased load and they do not lead to people gathering too much for public health protocols.

Council did not pass any specific motion to address the issue but agreed to advocate to upper levels of government and consider financial support in the 2021 budget.

"Our community deserves and needs equitable access to the necessities and in the world that we're living in, internet is a necessity," Klose said. "It's something we all need and it's not fair to the students that can't get that access."

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Warden Liz Danielsen expressed disappointment at misinformation being circulated about the shoreline protection bylaw. *File photo*

County pushes back on shoreline 'misinformation'

By Joseph Quigley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

County council debated the future of its shoreline bylaw and will hold another special meeting to address an increasingly fraught debate over the legislation.

Council decided to schedule a special meeting Jan. 27 to examine the bylaw and its upcoming public consultation, which will include both an online survey and a public meeting in February or March.

Councillors weighed whether the document – which would restrict development within 30 metres of the shoreline – should be slowed in the wake of increased outcry. Warden Liz Danielsen lamented the spread of misinformation and council receiving some vitriol.

"Disappointed to see the number of people who are willing to cast aspersions about us and our work," she said. "About the thought that this is being sprung upon them and we're doing this under the cloak of secrecy. This is a topic that's been under discussion for 2.5 years and longer.

"It is unfortunate that people feel they need to start calling us names and giving members of council a difficult time ... The raft of emails we have received in the last couple of weeks, I believe are reactive of the misinformation."

She said they must find a way to combat the misinformation. She indirectly referenced the Haliburton County Home Builders Association (HCHBA) estimating a \$750,000 cost to enforce the law and advertising that. However, that figure is inaccurate. The County's current 2021 draft budget features \$115,000 towards enforcement, including \$88,000 for a new officer to assist the one already on staff.

The HCHBA and others have also pushed to delay the changes until after the pandemic is over to allow for an in-person public meeting. But Coun. Brent Devolin said he opposed that because the pandemic could linger for the rest of the term.

"For us to delay it because of COVID ... I don't think (the bylaw) will be dealt with in this term of council and I think that would truly be a mistake," he said.

However, deputy warden Patrick Kennedy said they should hit a pause button on the document and it is not yet good enough to move forward.

"I'm not in anybody's back pocket on this. I am as much in love with the water as anybody at this table or in this County," he said. "I don't feel this bylaw is at that stage yet, to the point it can be taken out to the public for comment. I fully endorse a step back ... I feel like we have lost the public trust on both sides of the issue."

Kennedy suggested an external consultation group or committee examine the document, but Coun. Carol Moffatt pushed back on that.

"Ultimately, it's our job as the people who are elected to listen to the public," Moffatt said. "Our problem right now is, I think, all the noise that's out there. We can't address the misinformation without a competing information campaign, and we can't do that without dedicated resources."

She added council needed to provide input into what is going out to the public and what questions will be asked.

Danielsen said people should be more specific about what parts of the bylaw should be addressed, which she said it not being seen in messages lately.

"We're hearing a lot from all angles and we need to work hard to try and get it right."

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Minden Hills budget standing committee met Jan. 14. Photo by Lisa Gervais.

Minden targets 3.65 per cent levy hike

Three per cent taxation and .65 per cent growth

By Lisa Gervais

Minden Hills councillors want a 3.65 per cent levy increase in the 2021 budget - a figure they began to work towards Jan. 14 after the second draft of the budget started at 21.75 per cent.

It is not unusual for the township to begin with a large number, Mayor Brent Devolin pointed out. Last year, for example, the first draft came in at 34.14 per cent. They settled at a 5.3 per cent tax levy increase.

"In Minden, we haven't lost our mind," Devolin said. "We use a somewhat different methodology."

CAO Trisha McKibbin added at the start of the day, "staff is very much aware this (21.75 per cent) is not an acceptable number."

Coun. Bob Carter suggested they set a target figure and Devolin agreed, saying, "to set a range of the levy increase might be a good place to start ... like setting a destination, embarking on a trip, so we have that lens as we talk about and make decisions for council."

Devolin said they set a number of just under four per cent for the County of Haliburton and he wanted to see Minden Hills within a percentage of that. Carter and deputy-mayor Lisa Schell suggested two per cent. Coun. Ron Nesbitt said he'd be happy with three; Coun. Jean Neville anywhere between two and four; Coun. Jennifer Hughey under five and Coun. Pam Sayne between two and 3.9 per cent.

Councillors decided to go with a target of

a three per cent levy increase and .65 per cent of growth. Only Coun. Carter voted against in a recorded vote.

Later in the meeting, Carter suggested they look to the 2019 and 2020 budget surpluses to help them reach their goal. He thought they could use half for the 2021 budget and the other half for the 2022 budget.

Director of finance Lorrie Blanchard said there was \$1 million from 2019 and about \$200,000 from 2020, which meant they could plug \$600,000 from budget surpluses into third draft numbers for 2021.

The draft had hefty borrowing numbers. In addition to \$12 million for the arena, there was talk of borrowing more than \$7.5 million for roads, bridges and culverts. Coun. Sayne said she thought Ontario's 444 municipalities had to continue to lobby the province for one per cent of the GST to help townships with infrastructure costs.

Council is also considering whether or not to proceed with some new hires, including a deputy treasurer and two new staff for the building, planning and bylaw department. It was suggested the hirings could be phased in and not placed in the budget until Sept. 1 due to the unlikelihood of hiring during COVID. Council also found efficiencies by backdating hiring for the new arena and community centre.

Fire chief Nelson Johnson said they'd had 298 calls in 2020, the department's biggest year to date, representing a 30 per cent increase. He wants to up wages for

firefighters by 22 per cent, representing a jump to 180 hours per firefighter from 140.

There also remain outstanding decisions about roads.

Blanchard said they plan to use gas tax and OCIF funding [\$295,000] for road resurfacing projects to include Rice, Clear Lake, Brady Lake, Lochlin, Tom Bolton and Howland Junction roads.

They are also looking to borrow \$7,768,300 for major roadworks, including engineering and design for sections of Scotch Line and Bobcaygeon roads. There are planned replacement of culverts along the Shuyler's Island Causeway and a total of 34.52kms of mechanical brushing in the budget.

There was some discussion of cutting \$257,000 for engineering-related costs for Blairhampton Road.

Schell said she didn't want to cut anything from the roads budget.

"This is the department I get the most calls and complaints about. For years, we've been robbing Peter to pay Paul in this department. I'd like to see it get left in the budget."

Carter said if council hopes to get to 3.65 per cent, they have to ask themselves, "is it something we really need to do?"

"It comes down to having to make some hard decisions in the end if we are committed to the tax increase we want to have. We are going to be paying interest on whatever we borrow. I'm all for investing in this area if we can afford it."

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COVID delays opening of Minden's new rec centre

By Lisa Gervais

Minden's new \$12.7 million arena and community centre is not expected to open until June 1, and possibly later, staff and councillors determined at a Minden Hills budget standing committee meeting Jan. 14.

With the province of Ontario declaring a second state of emergency until Feb. 10 at the earliest, director of community services, Craig Belfry, said his original plan of a soft March 1 opening is not going to happen.

Mayor Brent Devolin raised the issue while talking about the second draft of the community services department budget.

Belfry said he was looking for an additional \$616,225 or a 51.57 per cent increase from 2020 with "the majority of this increase in association with operationalizing the new recreation complex, including equipment, supplies and staffing."

Devolin said following the stay-at-home order effective Jan. 14 to Feb. 10, he couldn't see a soft opening happening before June 1, well past the hockey and figure skating seasons. He added there was no point in including new staffing dollars for the facility as of Jan. 1, 2021, but instead phasing hiring and related costs to Sept. 1.

"I think anything short of that is a pipe dream," Devolin said. "I just don't think it's on."

"Turns your world upside down, would you say?" Devolin asked Belfry.

Belfry said the stay-at-home order "dramatically" changes what he and his

department had been planning for. He said with a facility opening delayed until June it means reduced costs. For example, they will not have to turn the ice plant on until late August, saving \$10,000-a-month until then. He agreed staffing could also be delayed.

Devolin added even if the township is able to open the complex in June, or perhaps more realistically for Sept. 1, the community centre won't be open for the types of functions it has hosted in the past until there is widespread vaccination locally. He added it would likely mean limited numbers in the fitness centre and on the walking track. Belfry thought a reduced opening could be managed with existing staff until fully operational.

CAO Trisha McKibbin said she would do a follow-up report for third round budget talks that not only represents reduced staffing and operational costs due to COVID, but reduced revenue as well.

Council voted to set a tentative opening date of June 1, 2021 with new staffing not to be budgeted until September 1, 2021.

During the discussion, council also touched on some of the remaining purchases at the arena and community centre to get it up and running.

A report itemized some \$167,000 worth of items that would be considered for debenturing.

Council also discussed inclusions of volleyball lines for the gym floor (\$1,800), finishing and sealing the concrete floors in the stands and upper arena public



The S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena and Community Centre remains empty. *File photo.*

washrooms (\$35,000). There was also talk of a snack bar (\$60,000), and a security system (\$10,000). Council also approved the purchase of a ride-on floor machine (\$15,995) and an Olympia leveller (\$16,800).

Director of finance, Lorrie Blanchard, said they would be looking to borrow

approximately \$12 million for the arena project over a 25-year period, which would amount to \$638,000 a year in repayments.

In her initial report, Blanchard put all debentures together, including roads, bridges and culverts, but Carter said "these need to be separated as much as possible, so (they are) kept transparent and clean."

HIGHLANDS EAST NEWS

Backing calls for pandemic relief

Highlands East Council agreed to support two external resolutions calling for COVID-19 support for childcare and veterans' clubs at its January 19 meeting.

One resolution from the Town of Carleton Place asked the province to prioritize children and childcare in its post-pandemic recovery plan and provide increased funding to providers.

Another resolution from the Township of Huron-Kinloss asked the province to expedite a planned amendment to provide a retroactive property tax exemption for veterans' clubs from 2019 onward. Council voted to support both resolutions.

Building steady despite pandemic

Builders constructed \$12.1 million in projects in Highlands East last year, compared to \$12.25 million in 2019.

Staff presented the 2020 totals for the building department. The municipality also issued 192 permits, nine fewer than in 2019.

Deputy mayor Cec Ryall complimented the building staff. "You guys, under the circumstances, have done a really unbelievable job. You were shut down for a bunch of time where you couldn't do anything. What you've done - in terms of the volume of work and the financial contribution - is really worth saying 'thank you' for."

Committee meetings to return

Highlands East is rebooting its committees after a year of hiatus with a joint structure.

Council approved the modified structure the meeting. The economic development coordinator will create an agenda for a joint meeting to be livestreamed sometime in March, with future meetings after that to be considered monthly for priority items only. Public members of the committee would be panellists.

The municipality has not run committee meetings since the pandemic due to technical difficulties and limited IT.

Ryall said the joint structure is a very good idea.

"I know a lot of committees want to get into the projects," Ryall said.

However, the fire committee - which was investigating service changes and attracted controversy over fears of hall closures - will not be included. CAO Shannon Hunter said fire chief Chris Baughman is too preoccupied with additional duties as the community emergency management coordinator.

"Continuance of the fire committee will be reviewed at a later date," Hunter said.

(Highlands East news compiled by Joseph Quigley, Local Journalism Initiative reporter).

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County takes first steps in operations overhaul

By Joseph Quigley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

County council formalized an economic development position and collaborative procurement as its first steps toward improving operations as recommended by a service delivery review.

Council discussed the review at a special meeting Jan. 13. All members agreed to include an economic development position in this year's budget and to begin work on collaborative procurement later this year.

The initiatives are just two of the 12 overarching areas addressed by consultant StrategyCorp in the review to improve collaboration, efficiency and realize more than \$1 million in potential cash flow improvements. Council also agreed to work through the other recommendations slowly at its future meetings.

"I know that this has been a difficult one," Warden Liz Daniels said. "But I think we've come to some agreement about how we're going to approach this a bit at a time, in a reasonable fashion that works for everybody."

StrategyCorp recommended the County hire an economic development officer this year, with an estimated upfront cost of \$200,000 annually. It also suggested starting collaborative procurement – joint purchasing of goods and services by the County and its lower-tier municipalities – with estimated savings between \$372,000 and \$1,193,000 annually once implemented.

Coun. Brent Devolin said it made sense to move on procurement early.

"That's some of the savings that fund and helps some of the things that will come in subsequent years," Devolin said.

"It's a real area of need for the County," CAO Mike Rutter said. "No one (on staff) has that expertise. They're not a purchasing expert. That would be really helpful for us."

But these only represent two of the six initiatives StrategyCorp suggested to start in 2021. The others were communications, waste management, roads and co-ordination. Council directed staff to bring back more information about implementing those and other recommendations at a future meeting.

Danielsen said ongoing discussions will be needed, adding better communication is important.

"We're not good at communicating with each other," she said. "We have discussions at the County council and quite often the information just stays here. It doesn't go back to the lower-tiers."

However, Devolin said live-streamed meetings make it easier for lower-tier councillors to access.

Although the County may yet move on other initiatives, deputy warden Patrick Kennedy cautioned to not overload staff.

"I'm just so worried about our staff, about burning them out," Kennedy said. "If it takes an extra year, I don't care."

"We definitely need to agree on an approach and what those, maybe one or two low-hanging fruit pieces are," he said. "That aren't going to create a massive workload for any specific individual."



County council agreed to start work on joint purchasing of goods and services, such as contracts and road salt. *Photo via Flickr.*

Kennedy praised council for getting through the meeting.

"I'm just so proud of this group," Kennedy said. "We've made some pretty

big decisions and I'm just so thrilled to be part of it."

Groups focus of OPP COVID enforcement

By Joseph Quigley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The OPP is enforcing a new stay-at-home order and dispersing larger gatherings, but said it is not targeting individuals.

The province introduced a new stay-at-home order Jan. 14, demanding people only leave for essential trips such as work, purchasing goods, exercise, caring for animals or others, or moving. The province also said law enforcement would be empowered to issue fines under the order.

OPP spokesperson Const. Iryna Nebogatova said the attention the order has received has brought more complaints, which drive enforcement. She added gatherings - limited to five people outdoors - are the main source of the complaints.

"I do understand the stay-at-home order under the emergency management and Civil Protection Act, Reopening Ontario Act are quite confusing," Nebogatova said. "What we are focusing on here would be the large gatherings, the gatherings whether they're indoor or outdoor."

"The individuals are not the focus of this enforcement," she added.

In a press release Jan. 15, OPP said it could levy fines of \$750 for failing to comply with the order and/or \$1,000 for preventing others from complying. However, the press release added that

officers will not arbitrarily stop an individual or vehicle to check compliance with the orders.

"Individuals are not expected to provide proof of essential work," OPP said. "Officers can ask an individual to identify themselves if they have reasonable grounds to believe the individual is violating an act."

The province said bylaw enforcement can also issue fines under the order, but Dysart et al bylaw officer Robert Mascia said he is redirecting complaints to OPP.

"If the OPP require assistance in enforcement measures, the municipality's bylaw department will gladly help," Mascia said.

Cottagers being allowed

County resident Donna Pugh said she called police on a cottager neighbour who visited their secondary residence this past weekend.

But Pugh said OPP indicated that it is allowed – and they were not going to attend to address someone travelling to a secondary residence.

"Our premier of the province has strongly told us all to stay home," Pugh said. "Then to see our County booming with people who don't live here all the time, when they're asked to stay home, I just find that really frustrating."

The order states someone can travel to



OPP have begun enforcing a new stay-at-home order but said it is focused on gatherings rather than individuals. *File photo.*

another residence if they intend to be there for less than 24 hours and are attending for an essential purpose; or if they intend to reside there for at least 14 days.

Nebogatova did not directly address cottager enforcement when asked but said there are exemptions for people to leave their homes under the order that should be respected.

"We are requesting that the members of the public voluntarily comply with the new stay-at-home order to limit their mobility outside their homes except for essential reasons," she said.

Pugh said despite the province's words, the enforcement is not going far enough.

"The whole thing doesn't have many teeth," she said.

Editorial opinion

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Students must not be left behind

The image of an educator and student needing to teach and learn from a car at a WiFi hotspot in the County does not sit well with me.

But that's what the Klose family had to do when the pandemic closed Haliburton Highlands Secondary School in 2020. Like many County families, they don't have the internet required to support online learning.

Point in Time, which has been looking into the issue, says it's affecting approximately 150 students and youth in the County. Executive-director Marg Cox added they surveyed 59 local youth, and only 14 per cent said they had reliable internet and 54 per cent said they have less-than-unlimited data.

In the first instance, this is probably due to our poor connectivity and in the second it may be due to economic hardship. Some families can afford unlimited. Some cannot.

Point in Time is spearheading a campaign. Long-term, it's about overcoming connectivity barriers. Short-term, it's solutions for youth in urgent need, such as cellular data plans or hubs, increasing community access point alternatives, and meeting the transportation needs of those who cannot get to hotspots.

Cox brought her plea to County council. They suggested it was a Ministry of Education issue. However, Cox pointed out that they could not wait for the ministry to

take action as it is not going to happen any time soon, if at all.

Council didn't pass any specific motions but said they'd lobby upper levels of government and "consider" financial support in the 2021 budget.

Unfortunately, that really isn't good enough.

Students are locked out of schools now and for the immediate future. The County can lobby Laurie Scott and Jamie Schmale all they want but nothing is going to happen quickly. And the budget won't be passed for another month or two.

Warden Liz Danielsen suggested they could dip into safe restart funding – and they should. While maybe this is not how the province would like the money to be spent, in this case it might be better to beg forgiveness than ask for permission.

If they cannot provide the dollars to help families with technology to get them connected, they could open their facilities as temporary hotspots. There is the newly-refurbished Minden recreation complex, upstairs at the Haliburton arena or the Keith Tallman Arena in Wilberforce. There is the Dorset Recreation Complex.

Someone would have to immediately jump in to finalize a list of needy families, and perhaps organize volunteer drivers to get them transported to those WiFi hotspots. There will be logistics around public health

protocols too. The Trillium Lakelands District School Board could surely assist as it knows of bus drivers not working right now. Perhaps smaller school buses could be enlisted in the effort. There are resources in this community. They just have to be enabled.

While County council talks about lobbying upper levels of government, and perhaps putting money in the 2021 budget, we've already seen the Haliburton and District Lions Club jump in with \$1,000 towards the cause. Once again, it looks like the community is having to bail out yet another need in our County.

We have heard so many press announcements, federally, provincially and municipally about the billions of dollars going into ensuring no one is left behind when it comes to connectivity – and yet – at least 150 school children here are being left behind. They need the help now – not in a month or two. It's not just time for the County to step up, either. Scott and Schmale should be embarrassed that constituents in the County have to drive to a high school parking lot in Haliburton, in winter, so they can teach and learn.



By Lisa Gervais

COVID CORNER Vaccine safety

The official Summary of Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFIs) for COVID-19 from Dec. 13, 2020 to Jan. 9, 2021 says there were 21 adverse events out of 113,246 COVID-19 vaccines administered in Ontario. This is a reporting rate of 18.5 per 100,000 doses administered. All 21 were listed as non-serious (100 per cent of total AEFI reports). The most common reported adverse event was allergic skin reaction, reported in 43 per cent of the total 21 AEFI reports. No AEFI reports met the "serious" definition, and there were no AEFI reports that included "medically important events or COVID-19 vaccine-specific adverse events of special interest." [Source: COVID-19 vaccine safety: Weekly report on adverse effects following immunization - Canada.ca] All adverse events are tracked and monitored.

Safety data from the Evidence Summary provided by Pfizer-BioNTech research data tell us that 44,000 subjects were randomly placed in either the group receiving the vaccine or in the group that got a placebo (fake vaccine). From the 21,669 who received the vaccine, report of pain at the injection site was common (up to 83 per cent), resolved within one or two days, and was considered mild or moderate. Fatigue was reported in 34-59 per cent of recipients (varying by age groups), headaches 25-51 per cent, muscle aches 11-37 per cent, fever 1.4-3.7 per cent (more common in subjects younger than 55 years). These symptoms started within one day of receiving the

vaccine and resolved within two days. The majority of symptoms were described as mild or moderate.

An evidence summary provided by Moderna COVID-19 vaccine researchers tell us that 30,413 subjects were randomized to receive either the vaccine or a placebo. Pain at injection site was reported in 83 per cent of people after dose one, and 88 per cent of people after dose two. Redness was reported in 2.8-6.3 per cent of people and swelling in 6.1-12.2 per cent. Fatigue was reported in 37-65 per cent; headache 32-58 per cent; muscle pain 22-58 per cent and joint pain in 16-42 per cent of participants. Fever (38.9-40 degrees Celsius) occurred in less than 0.1 per cent after first dose and 1.3 per cent after second dose. Symptoms appeared in the first one to two days after the vaccine was given and lasted only one to two days.

In summary, the most common adverse events reported from the two research studies were mild to moderate and short-lived. The reactions were less common in older adults than in younger adults. Participants are to be monitored for two years after the second dose of vaccine to measure long-term protection and safety.

These research safety data were published only after a third party unbiased review was given by NACI (Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunization). NACI is an external advisory body that provides independent and continuing scientific and public health reviews to the

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) that is responsible for public health, emergency preparedness and response, and infectious and chronic disease control and prevention.

When it comes to effectiveness, at seven-plus days, after the second dose of Pfizer's vaccine, 95 per cent protection from COVID-19 was achieved. Protection begins as early as 12 days after receiving dose number one. Moderna's research reported that starting two weeks after the second dose of vaccine there is 94.5 per cent protection. It is 80 per cent effective after one dose.

These vaccines are considered highly effective at preventing infection of COVID-19 and are shown to be safe and well tolerated.

Currently, both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are being tested on the SARS-CoV-2 variant mutations and have been shown to maintain protection against these variants. Mutations will continue to occur in the virus, but they alter only small pieces of the virus. Thanks to the technology of the mRNA vaccines there is a broad immune response activated that creates many antibodies. While we do not know for how long the immune response will protect us, we do know that these vaccines will, over time, literally open our doors to freedom.



By Dr. Nell Thomas

Editorial opinion

■ PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Brenda-Lee Cunningham titles this photo “friends of our Algonquin Highlands.”

■ LETTERS

Scott ignoring environmental questions

Dear editor,

S. McCormick nailed the most important issue of the era in the letter published in the January 14th *Highlander*.

In this case it's Laurie Scott who's ignoring the question (I must write to her, but I've done that before and I think *The Highlander* is a better option) and Doug Ford who's ignoring the issue.

It seems that the COVID crisis is just the excuse some politicians have wanted, in order to sweep away some bothersome irritants that they would rather not think about.

By that I mean vital provincial responsibilities, which include nurturing the health of our wetlands and wildlands.

Governments in the past, including

Conservative governments, have from time to time made the tough choice, and the right choice, to prioritize nature over profit.

It's appalling that the Ford government apparently sees the pandemic as an opportunity to vandalize the modest amount of environmental protection that presently exists in Ontario, knowing discussion and debate will be virtually non-existent - note Laurie Scott's response to the question from *The Highlander*.

I wrote to David Crombie a few weeks ago to congratulate him on his principled stand in resigning as chair of the Greenbelt Council.

I wish the Ford Government would listen to him.

John Bateman
Minden Hills

Remembering Camp Comak

Dear editor,

So great to hear the Leslie M. Frost Centre is finding a new life with the OPSEU purchase (*Highlander*, January 14, 2021).

Even better to hear that the plans include community engagement and collaboration through the municipality. That's what good neighbours do.

Not mentioned in the article and editorial was the centre's connection to “good old” Camp Comak. Campers arrived by bus at the centre and were marshalled by age category, while waiting for the “Coma-King” pontoon boat to ferry us over to the island one small group at a time. LMFC represented the start of an exciting time at camp, and, the melancholy moment of departure for home and normal (read,

boring) routine.

Beyond that, the centre was also the place where we gathered to venture up the forest fire tower and be terrorized by the descent down the ladder (I froze when the trap door was opened, much to the aggravation of the counsellors who had to shuttle me down).

Most memorably, LMFC hosted the entire camp population in the rec hall on July 20, 1969, to watch and hear Neil Armstrong land on the Moon on their (by today's monster standards) small black and white T.V. - one small step for Man, many, many trips for the Coma-King! Now that's a memory!

I'm sure hundreds of former Camp Comakers will be happy to see the centre be an active energetic place again.

R. D. (Bob) Waldon
Caledon and Halifax, Canada

Highlander news

SCHOOL BOARD NEWS

Dealing with change

At the Trillium Lakelands District School board's first virtual meeting of 2021, trustees heard Director of Education Wes Hahn paint a picture of a school system that, while attempting to deliver the best education possible during a pandemic, is straining at the seams to cope with all the changes that are being thrown at it.

"This has been quite a week of dealing with change," Hahn told the Jan. 12 meeting.

The board will deliver programming virtually until at least Jan. 25. Hahn was expecting an announcement from public health and the ministry of education Jan. 20 about a return to in-person education. The announcement was not made before publish time. He also hoped parents were not confused by the fact some urban boards in southern Ontario will continue to deliver programming virtually until Feb. 10.

"We strongly recommend that our teaching staff stay home," Hahn said. "Custodial staff will be at school along with teachers and educational assistants who have special needs students in their building still receiving in-person education."

Hahn told trustees when in-person education does return, enhanced screening protocols will be in place and the testing of asymptomatic students stepped up.

"I realize the toll that this is taking on families, students and staff," Hahn said. "It is especially hard on teachers with their own children at home. Internet conductivity issues have become extremely stressful also. I appreciate the patience all our parents have shown through this pandemic."

"We need to celebrate what we are doing," Hahn said. "Teachers are working so hard. It is very encouraging to see the things that are happening and we want to make sure

we are supporting teachers, particularly those delivering learning at home which many teachers are finding difficult."

Wait lists

Hahn addressed the issue of wait list times for students moving from on-line learning to in-person learning and vice-versa and said parents will need to remain patient.

"Until spaces become available, students won't be moving," Hahn said. "Re-organization is very stressful at this time. We can't keep all families happy. We will not engage in a large-scale re-sorting as it will send the system into upheaval."

Hahn told trustees there are 70 students in the elementary panel requesting a return to in-person learning, with five wanting to move from in-person to on-line learning.

Student trustee reports

Student trustees Kaylee Kelly and Ryder Lytle presented anecdotal data provided by peers to indicate that for some students this very unusual school year has been extremely challenging.

Lytle told trustees and senior staff that board software packages are not capable of converting senior math and science annotations and technical terminology, making it very challenging to do the work on-line.

Kelly shared students, particularly those responsible for care of younger siblings while parents work, have found keeping up with their on-line work all but impossible.

"Students are finding themselves unmotivated and overwhelmed. They are overstressed. There is too much material coming at them and too little time to do it," Kelly said. "Many are facing five-plus hours on-line with three full lessons and



Local school playgrounds remain empty. Photo by Lisa Gervais.

an evaluation every day. Three quarters of the people I speak with respond negatively (about their current educational experiences)."

Brohman advocates for parents

Haliburton trustee Gary Brohman thanked the student trustees for the insights.

"We need to meet all student needs at this time. Virtual learning makes school more challenging for many students. Hopefully (all students learning on-line) this is only a couple more weeks and it needs to be without a load of homework and

expectations," Brohman said.

Brohman also wanted to know what the board could do for a family educating multiple children at home with only one computer or inadequate internet.

"The parent should call their home school," Hahn said, "and packages are available for students to work from home."

The Haliburton trustee raised a final scenario about parents unable to get their senior elementary students to even log on, let alone do work on-line.

"We recommend that you contact the home principal to request work packages that might work better," Hahn suggested. (School board news compiled by Kirk Winter)

Non-profit housing complex gets new playground

By Joseph Quigley
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Children in Wilberforce's Maple View complex are enjoying a new \$34,000 playground area thanks to a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The Monmouth Township Non-Profit Housing Corporation announced the completion of the playground Jan. 14. Originally finished in October, the structure and rubber matting area replaced one that was 25 years old.

Administrator Kathy Rogers said the play area benefits their residents and is a way for the children there to play more safely without having to exit the community amidst a pandemic.

The playground "does get used quite a lot by families that are here and so we wanted to be able to replace it," Rogers said.

The structure features an additional slide and an extra level compared to the old one. There is also an adjusted wooden border in one area of the matting, allowing for easier access for strollers, walkers and wheelchairs.

Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock MPP Laurie Scott said it is great news for residents.

"Improving playground infrastructure encourages physical activity for youth and increases accessibility for families living in the community," she said.

In a press release, the corporation said the project has a "positive, long-term outcome."

"The children who live in the complex, and visitors who come to the building, will enjoy many more years of active play with friends and neighbours when conditions improve," the press release said. "Families who receive safe affordable housing within our complex will have amenities right outside their door, making playtime easy."

The corporation reached its 25th anniversary in 2020 but was unable to host a celebration due to the pandemic. Still, Rogers said it was great to reach the milestone.

"It's very exciting," she said. "We've done well and the building's in great shape. Great tenants. Helped out a lot of people along the way."



Monmouth Township Non-Profit Housing Corporation administrator Kathy Rogers stands next to a new playground recently completed at the complex. Photo by Joseph Quigley.

Highlander news

Highlands East to rein in exotic animals

By Joseph Quigley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Highlands East council voted to move ahead with drafting an exotic animal bylaw to address the possibility of them in the municipality.

Bylaw enforcement officer, Kristen Boylan, brought the idea forward Jan. 19. She said it was a response to a recent controversy in the neighbouring Hastings Highlands, where the municipality lacked such a law to address a family bringing in a collection of lions and tigers to create a roadside safari experience.

Boylan said Ontario is the only Canadian province without exotic animals legislation. About half of Ontario municipalities have rules on them, but none within the County. She said with the dog bylaw due for an update, she decided they should address the matter.

"If we do not have a bylaw, there's nothing to stop anyone from bringing in say, lion cubs, bears, pythons," Boylan said. "No way of having any enforcement should we receive any complaints."

Boylan also offered an option to have a unified bylaw including dogs and exotic pets, but deputy mayor Cec Ryall said it would make more sense to separate them.

"In the case of dogs, it's pretty well defined," Ryall said, noting the distinction between exotic and other unregulated animals such as domestic cats. "We're going to licence exotic animals, but we're not going to licence cats."

As an example, Boylan cited a 2019 Huntsville bylaw, which she said reduced complaints there. Coun. Suzanne Partridge said she is in favour of prohibiting exotic pets but added she did not want to do so for dog hybrids, which are illegal in Huntsville.

"My last dog who just died in June was a hybrid and I wouldn't have been allowed



Highlands East is preparing an exotic animal bylaw. Photo via Flickr.

to have her and it was a sweetheart," she said, adding it can be difficult to determine a hybrid without DNA testing. "It can't just be the judgement of the bylaw control officer."

Boylan replied she could research and

bring forward information on hybrids.

Coun. Cam McKenzie said the municipality would need to figure out how to grandfather the rules for those who already have such pets.

"Snakes are more common than what most

people realize," McKenzie said. "To try and prohibit them is going to cause some issues ... That is something we maybe want to think about before we do this."

Muskoka outdoes Haliburton in climate change goals

By Joseph Quigley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Muskoka Climate change co-ordinator Kevin Boyle said the district's goal of reducing its corporate and community emissions by 50 per cent in the next 10 years was no certainty.

Boyle spoke to an audience of 37 at the Environment Haliburton! (EH) enviro-café Jan. 12 to discuss "A New Leaf: Muskoka's Climate Strategy" and its creation.

The strategy's goal is significantly greater than Haliburton County's corporate plan to reduce its emissions by 30 per cent from 2018 levels by 2030. Boyle doubted the goal would have been reached without the advocacy efforts of Climate Action Muskoka (CAM), who demanded it.

"You see them every Friday on the corner. That momentum really builds," Boyle said. "While that is an ambitious target, that shouldn't be seen as an ambitious target. That is what the science tells us we should do. That should be seen as the baseline."

Boyle highlighted the years of effort that went into building the climate strategy passed Dec. 21, which also includes a net-zero emissions target by 2050. He said action is needed to address climate change and took pride in Muskoka's efforts.

"I am very happy despite how confusing the process was - and it was - where we got to and how much support the council has for it and how much support the community has for it," Boyle said.

"It brings strong policy leadership and firm targets which put climate action at the forefront of all decision-making," CAM spokesperson Melinda Zytaruk said in a press release.

The County of Haliburton passed its corporate climate change mitigation plan in September. The County is still working on adaptation and community plans.

Boyle complimented the County for getting all its lower-tier townships on board with the overarching plan but said he could not celebrate if Muskoka went for a lower

target, given scientific consensus about the need for greater reductions.

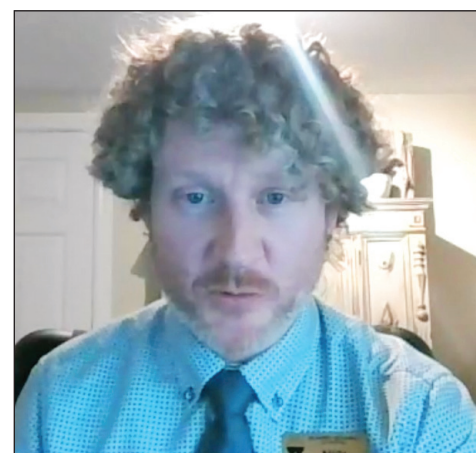
"I would rather fail at meeting 50 per cent but try, rather than set something lower. In saying that, I'm not criticizing other governments that haven't set that target. Maybe they could set that target and blow beyond it," Boyle said.

Canada's formal goal is to reach a 30 per cent reduction of 2005 levels by 2030, though the federal government has said it will exceed that. Ontario's climate action plan aims to reduce its emissions by 37 per cent by 2030 from 1990 levels.

Boyle said the goal will require community buy-in, given 98 per cent of the district's emissions are from community-based sources.

"You need buy-in from everybody. So, you really want everyone at the table when you're developing those reduction strategies," he said.

EH! vice-president Terry Moore said the presentation had takeaways for the



Muskoka climate change co-ordinator Kevin Boyle spoke to the district's new plan at an enviro-café. Photo by Joseph Quigley.

organization for when the County begins its community planning.

"It's a lot of encouragement," Moore said. "Some really good ideas and lessons for us."

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Highlander business

WORKING MOMS

There are a small number of stay-at-home moms in Haliburton County who combine raising children and running a business. In this series, Carolyn Alder speaks with some of them.

‘Not just a mom’ doing something she loves

By Carolyn Alder

After Kenzie Merritt puts her daughter, Arden, down for her afternoon nap, she takes her oldest son, Joey, downstairs.

As the early afternoon sunlight floods the basement, Joey sits and watches his favourite show *The Wiggles* while Merritt plugs in her wood burner. She figures she has an hour or so to get some work done.

The stay-at-home mom operates a business called Happy Twig Shop where she uses reclaimed birch wood and turns it into magnetic alphabet disks or wedding ring holders which are her best seller.

Merritt’s business is new, only just over a year old. It all started when she decided to turn some inexpensive wooden cutting boards into Christmas gifts by using a wood burner.

“I had so much fun with it and everyone loved the gifts I did, I thought I would try some different stuff. So, I started cutting some rounds. I had never wood burned before but I loved it so much I ended up buying a better-quality burner.”

Merritt, originally from the Hamilton area, moved to Minden in the fall of 2019.

“When we moved up here, it was questionable if I was going to find work when mat leave was over and would we have to put two kids in daycare or could I stay home with them. Then COVID hit. [My husband Jamie and I] made the decision we were going to try to make it work with me staying home and this is kind of a bonus.”

Merritt says she is trying to find the balance between being with her kids and filling the orders she is getting.

“My mornings are all about the kids. I’ll take them out places or go for walks. I can

not get work done with the two of them (by her work corner in the basement). I leave the work until nap time. Some days Joey will watch cartoons or play on his own. Some days it just doesn’t happen. I’ve just learned to accept that because if I get stressed about it, it’s not helping anybody. Night time is my prime time to get my work done.”

Merritt sits at her work table. She starts burning the name on a “First Christmas” ornament while a small video monitor shows her daughter sleeping in her crib. Her three-year-old son starts drawing on a nearby white board. *The Wiggles* are singing about fruit salad on the TV.

“I started the Etsy store with the mindset if I didn’t sell anything, I wasn’t losing anything. I was going to be a stay-at-home mom regardless, this is just my effort at bringing in some extra money and something for me. I love creating stuff. I love doing this. I found that I was getting absorbed in just being a mom every day. I love that the kids see me working and that I’m not just their gopher. I actually have something I do myself.

Some days I feel like a rock star, I’ve been a super mom and been so productive with work and then realize we have no clean clothes. I’m still working on finding the balance.”

Most of Merritt’s orders are from word of mouth such as the custom charcuterie boards which Joey sometimes helps wax or a wooden tic tac toe game.

“My grandpa always told me to find something to do that you love then you never work a day in your life. I’m not making a steady income but I’m doing something I love and I’m not just a mom.”



Kenzie Merritt and sometimes helper, Joey. Photo by Carolyn Alder.

Chamber of commerce gets new executive director

By Joseph Quigley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce has a new executive director to help guide the organization as it navigates the pandemic in 2021.

The chamber announced Jan. 18 that Amanda Conn is taking over the position from Jennifer Locke, who left Jan. 15. With the move, the organization also announced it would undertake a strategic planning process in early 2021.

Conn said she hopes to build on the successes of her predecessor.

“We are certainly looking to continue to be - and strengthen - the voice of business in the Haliburton Highlands,” Conn said.

The new executive director said she has lived in the Highlands full-time for a year. She said her background is in software companies of many different sizes, as well as president of the Brady Lake Ratepayers’ Association.

“The board is excited to work with Amanda and we are confident that the Chamber is in good hands,” president Andrea Strano said. “Under Amanda’s guidance the chamber will be well-positioned to thrive and continue to support our members during these challenging times, and for years to come.”

In a press release, the organization also highlighted its 2020 efforts overseen by Locke, including the chamber partnership initiative to provide a youth wage subsidy and job board, online training, COVID-19 recovery and getting municipal support for an official BuyCloseBy season.

“The board and members are grateful for Jennifer’s hard work, dedication, and progress that she helped the chamber achieve during her time in this role. She has grown and nurtured relationships with leaders and other organizations in our community that will continue to be very beneficial to the success of the chamber,” Strano said.



The Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce has hired Amanda Conn as its new executive director. Submitted photo.

The chamber is still working out its strategic planning process, but Conn said its role in the pandemic is to communicate effectively with its members.

“Provide as many resources and opportunities as we can,” Conn said. “Looking for different ways we can support our members and really be a strong voice for business.”

Highlander investigates

HIGHLANDER INVESTIGATES

Some facing charges from separate incidents

Continued from page 1

stipulated why the charges were dropped or stayed.

The Highlander has also learned that four Haliburton County residents were charged in connection with more than one drug bust in 2020.

A then 59-year-old man and a 49-year-old man were charged on May 13, 2020 with trafficking cocaine. They were charged again on May 28 - just 16 days later - with possession for the purpose of trafficking cocaine. Both are still before the courts.

A then 30-year-old Haliburton man was also charged Jan. 30, 2020 with trafficking cocaine, possession of property obtained by crime under \$5,000 and possession of cocaine for trafficking. He was charged again on Nov. 12, 2020 - 10 months later - with possession of cocaine and fentanyl for the purpose of trafficking. He is still before the courts.

And a now 26-year-old Minden Hills man was charged on Jan. 30, 2020 - had those charges stayed on Dec. 2, 2020 - and was also charged on April 9, 2020 with possession, trafficking cocaine and possession of methamphetamine. He also had charges related to firearms and stolen property.

The ministry spokesperson said that the federal Crown, through the Public

Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC), is responsible for prosecuting charges laid under the Controlled Drug and Substances Act.

They told The Highlander Jan. 4, 2021 that the PPSC makes every effort to resolve files in a timely manner. They added they cannot comment on specific factors affecting any particular case. There are numerous factors which are outside of their control, a spokesperson added.

"For instance, when a person charged with an offence exercises his or her right to set a trial date in the Ontario Court of Justice or to have a preliminary inquiry and a trial in the Superior Court of Justice, it is not unusual for the matter to remain before the courts for over a year or more," she said.

"In addition, court closures and reductions in matters proceeding due to the COVID-19 pandemic have had an impact on many of our files."

'It feels like whack-a-mole'

Haliburton Highlands OPP detachment commander Liane Spong would not comment on the courts.

However, she said that one of the biggest challenges with drugs is recidivism, or



An image of the Scales of Justice. Flickr.

repeat offences.

"We know recidivism is always anticipated," Spong said. "That is how our team does so well. They anticipate there's going to be recidivism and they are already working on a layered approach to that. They are already on top of people every step of the way. When we are able to execute another series of successful warrants, some of the same players are re-arrested again."

Dysart et al Mayor Andrea Roberts declined to comment on the court system.

However, she did say it is "disheartening and really frustrating" to see people arrested, charged and released only to be arrested, charged and released a second time.

"It feels like whack-a-mole. Where you take down two or three people and make some good arrests and hope that you'll alleviate the problem and it pops up again. Punishment enough is obviously not a deterrent," she said. "It's a bit of a joke."

Next week: A look at the opioid crisis

INFORMATION PAGE

7 Milne Street, PO Box 359 Minden ON K0M 2K0 Phone: 705-286-1260
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(Virtual) Council Meetings

Council and Committee of the Whole meetings are currently being conducted virtually via web conference and Closed Session meetings via teleconference, until further notice. Meetings begin at 9:00 AM unless otherwise noted.

The schedule of upcoming meetings are:

January 28

Regular Council Meeting

February 11

Committee of the Whole Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by joining a live-stream link available on the township website at www.mindenhills.ca/council/ or by using the direct link provided in the notice. We encourage those wishing to view the meeting to also download the agenda, as it will not be displayed during the streaming process. Meeting agendas can be downloaded by visiting our website at www.mindenhills.ca/council/.

Please note the live-stream link provided for each meeting will only be activated while Council is in session.

Notice – 2021 Budget Deliberations

The Council of the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills will commence the 3rd Round of its 2021 Budget deliberations during its Regular Meeting of Council via web conference scheduled for January 28, 2021.

Trisha McKibbin, CAO/Clerk
705-286-1260 ext. 505
tmckibbin@mindenhills.ca

Request for Proposal

RFP #ADM 21-01

Bob Lake Public Boat Launch Design

The Township of Minden Hills and the Bob Lake Association are seeking proposals from qualified consultants for the preparation of a preliminary engineering design sufficient to determine the layout and positioning of a single station boat launching ramp at Claude Brown Road on Bob Lake.

The deadline for submissions is February 5, 2021 by 12:00 noon.

Visit our website at www.mindenhills.ca for more information and how to submit a proposal.

Landfill Safety

Please continue to practice social distancing at landfills. Keep 2m distance between you and others on site and only attend if absolutely necessary.

Tax Statements for Income Tax Purposes

Requests for Tax Statements can be mailed to the following address, or placed in the Township drop box labelled and located on the north wall of the Administration building facing Pritchard Lane and the Municipal parking lot. It is accessed from the wheelchair entrance and is at the top of the first ramp.

Absolutely no cash is to be deposited in the drop box.

Township of Minden Hills, PO Box 359, #7 Milne Street, Minden, ON K0M 2K0

Please include your name, the property roll number, a mailing address, as well as an email address and/or phone number with your request. Requests will be emailed if an email address is provided; otherwise the statement will be mailed through Canada Post.

Requests must be accompanied by a cheque for the applicable fee of \$10.00, for **each** property roll.

Requests will be processed in accordance with COVID19 safety protocols, so please allow a minimum of two (2) weeks for processing. If your request does not include all of the required information or fee, the Township will not be held responsible for any delays in providing the requested information.

Waste Reduction Tip

The average four-person household uses 2 rolls of paper towel per week. At \$1.50 per roll, that's \$156 per year! Try switching to cloth whenever possible to reduce waste and save money.

A Message From the Fire Department

Choosing a Fire Extinguisher for Your Home

At home, place the power to put out small fires in your hands and within your reach.

Step 1:

- Choose primary extinguishers for your home. This includes solutions for your living area, garage or workshop, and they're pieces of equipment that you absolutely must have, according to the NFPA.

- Living area – For your main home protection, install a 2-A: 10-B:C rated living area unit on every level of your home, no more than 40 feet apart. Class A-B-C.

- Garage/Workshop – Due to volumes of flammable liquids in the garage, you should install a higher rated unit such as the 3-A:40B-C Garage/Workshop unit. Class A-B-C.

Step 2:

- Choose supplementary extinguishers for your kitchen and areas with a higher likelihood of electrical equipment fires. These are not required, but are highly recommended.

- Kitchen – The kitchen is the likeliest place you will have a fire. Protect your home with a 711A extinguisher in the kitchen area.

- Electrical – Ideal for tackling fires involving energized electrical equipment with a rating of 1-A: 10-B:C. Class B-C.

How to use Fire Extinguishers

Stand 5 feet away from the fire and follow the four-step **PASS** procedure recommended by the National Fire Protection Association:

P - Pull the pin and hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you.

A - Aim low at the base of the fire.

S - Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly to discharge the extinguishing agent. (When the agent first hits the fire, the fire may briefly flare up. This should be expected.)

S - Sweep the nozzle from side to side, moving carefully toward the fire. Keep the extinguisher aimed at the base of the fire.

When to use Fire Extinguishers

It's important to remember that fire extinguishers are only one element of a complete fire survival plan. Only use your extinguisher after making sure:

- All residents of the home have been evacuated to safety
- The fire department has been notified
- There is a clear exit behind the person using the extinguisher

Use your extinguisher only to keep a small self-contained fire from growing, only when the room is not filled with smoke, or to create a safe pathway out of the home. Be sure to read the instructions and become familiar with your fire extinguisher's parts and operation before a fire breaks out.

Highlander people

Cats capture Cailey's heart in Dorset and Guelph

By Lisa Gervais

As a toddler, Dorset cottager Cailey Seymour held kittens that her aunt saved from outdoor living at Paint Lake. Now just 22 years old, she is carrying on that tradition by founding Dorset Rescue Kittens in May of last year.

A student in her final year of Sheridan College's veterinary technician program, Seymour and her partner, Thomas Marshall, are based in Guelph. However, they are working with a team of volunteers in the Dorset area who are doing their part to help orphaned kittens, and to spay and neuter adult cats to keep the feral situation in check. When she graduates this spring, Seymour plans to move back to the area and continue her rescue work in earnest.

Seymour said she's been greatly involved in animal welfare since becoming a teenager.

"I spent a month of my summer between high school and post-secondary school living and volunteering on an elephant orphanage in Zambia. I have travelled to Guatemala to assist veterinarians in high volume spay-neuter clinics. I rescued a dog in Costa Rica ...," she said.

She's worked at her local humane society, has volunteered at Woodlands Wildlife Sanctuary in Minden Hills and has a number of certificates for working with animals.

She said she started Dorset Rescue Kittens

after taking in a mother cat with five newborns and four other kittens last spring.

"After working and volunteering for several other animal rescue organizations, it was clear that it was meant to be for me to start something of my own," Seymour said.

She and Marshall launched a number of social media platforms, a website and email address, and set up fundraising through GoFundMe and Paypal.

On the ground up north, she relies on foster parents to help her. They have between five and 10 foster homes but are seeking more in Dorset and surrounding areas to begin fostering in the spring of 2021.

"Most of the time when someone reaches out about a feral cat colony or a family of cats they are feeding, they don't have the resources to trap them and bring them to us. So, we pack a vehicle with crates and blankets and do our best to catch cats that really don't want to be caught. We travel for hours every week to spend time rescuing kittens and bringing kittens to vet appointments," Seymour said.

They usually keep kittens 1.5 months before they can adopt them out. They often need medical attention and socializing before they go to their forever homes. Some stay as long as four months. "We provide food, litter, medications, toys, transportation and vetting while they are in our care," Seymour said.

Seymour said she remembers each of their



Cailey Seymour with one of her many rescue kittens. *Submitted photo.*

names, their faces, their quirks and special personalities. She also keeps close contact with everyone involved, the people who find the cats, fosters, adopters and donors.

"It has always been so exciting to watch the transition of a cold, sick, helpless outdoor kitten to a healthy, happy, loved kitten," she said.

"It's crazy to think that I've only been running the rescue for the last eight months and I can't wait to see where it goes. This rescue brings me so much happiness and knowing that every life that comes into my care likely wouldn't have survived without me, makes me want to do everything I can to help even more animals in need."

Dorset Rescue Kittens charges an adoption fee but is otherwise 100 per cent donation-based.

- Email address for contact and e-transfer donations: dorsetrescuekittens@hotmail.com
- Website: dorsetrescuekittens.ca
- They have an Amazon Wishlist and also accept medical supplies, kitten food, unscented litter, toys and live traps.
- GoFundMe: gofund.me/d0442e09
- Instagram: [@dorsetrescuekittens](https://www.instagram.com/dorsetrescuekittens)
- Facebook: Dorset Rescue Kittens

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Highlander community

Lions 'are in' for student internet connectivity

The Haliburton and District Lions recently donated \$1,000 to The Haliburton Children, Youth and Family Services' Internet Connectivity Working Group 'are you in?' fundraiser.

The initiative is aimed at addressing inequities in internet connectivity and the Implications for County children and youth.

"The working group, chaired by Marg Cox, executive director of Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents, has determined the need for both long-term and creative short-term solutions," Lion Gail Stelter said.

She said the Lions learned from the group's publication that significant barriers to reliable internet connectivity exist for children, youth and families across our community.

"We learn that these barriers, however, do not fall evenly, and existing disparities have only widened for those most in need of connection to supportive services during COVID. Being connected is critical for the development, health, and well-being of youth. The Lions are pleased to be able to use funds, recently raised through their Cash Calendar Lottery, to support this initiative." (Lisa Gervais)



Lions Jim and Marilyn Frost present a cheque for \$1,000 to Marg Cox. Submitted by Gail Stelter.

BUSINESS ADVISORIES | COVID-19 LOCAL BUSINESS ADJUSTMENTS & CLOSURES

Transat Travel – Operating remotely, contact by email: linda.coneybeare@transat.com or call 705-457-3290.

Cordell Carpet – Open for curb-side pickup. Monday to Friday, 7.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Email cordellcarpet@bellnet.ca or call 705-457-2022 or cordellcarpet.ca.

Algonquin Outfitters – Full details of operations can be found at algonquinoutfitters.com/covid-19-dec-28-2020 and for Haliburton store at algonquinoutfitters.com/store-location/haliburton. Offering curbside pickup and rentals as well as online sales at algonquinoutfitters.com or call 1-705-457-3737 for local service.

Outdoors Plus – Open but can only have one person in the store at a time. Currently keeping regular hours Mon-Fri 8 a.m.-6 p.m., Sat 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun 8 a.m.-3 p.m. This can change quickly, call store to make sure we are available. 705-457-3113.

Tim Hortons – Minden and Haliburton are open for drive-thru and walk-in take out. 12597 Highway 35, Minden & 5003 CR 21, Haliburton.

Buckley Electric – Open. Serving Haliburton County. Call 705-286-1134 or email info@buckleyelectric.com.

Abbey Gardens Food Hub – In-store shopping available. Call/shop on-line for curbside pick-up. Wednesday to Saturday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. 705-754-4769 or abbeygardens.ca/shop-online.

Minden Hills Rent-A-Club – Open by appointment for sales and service of Stihl and Cub Cadet products. Also the renting of equipment and party products. Call 705-286-3047.

Kubota North – Open with curbside pick up and drop off. Call 705-645-1175.

The Pregnancy Care & Family Support Centre – Remains available to our clients, using text/telephone 705-457-4673 and email hope@haliburtonpregnancycentre.ca.

John Fountain Electronics – Hours of operation, Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. / half hour those mornings for curb-side pickup.

Up River Trading Co. - uprivertrading.com is open for business

and we're doing curbside pickup in Minden and Haliburton on request. Call us at 705-286-1015. Our cafe remains closed during lockdown.

The Haliburton Real Estate Team – Is Business as (UN)Usual. We're here to help you buy or sell. Call Linda at 705-457-6508.

County Automotive – Open by appointment only. The office is closed to customers at this time. Drop off your vehicle only. Call 705-457-1411 or countyautomotive@hotmail.com.

Parker Pad & Printing – Open 8.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m., Monday-Friday. We can process all orders via phone, email and digital upload. Drop off/pick up location in front vestibule. 705-457-2458 or tracy.stoughton@parkerpad.com.

Fleming CREW Employment Services – All in-person services suspended until further notice. Offering appointments virtually and by phone. Please call, email or visit website to book appointment. 705-457-2020 or flemingcrew@flemingcollege.ca or www.flemingcrew@flemingcollege.ca.

Taylor Carpet One – Huntsville – Our showroom is closed but we are still open for curbside, Mon to Sat 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Call 705-789-9259 or visit taylorcarpetonehuntsville.com.

Country Rose Flowers & Garden – Accepting prepaid orders by phone for pickup or delivery. Open Mon-Sat 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. at 13513 Hwy 118 W Haliburton, ON 705-457-3774.

Lakeview Motel – Open, however business not as usual and we are accepting essential workers only. Call 705-457-1027 for information.

Riverview Furniture – Open offering curbside and delivery. Call or email 705-286-3167 or info@riverview-furniture.com

Wintergreen Maple – Open by chance or appointment (curbside) anytime your schedule allows. Call 705-286-3202.

Subway Minden & Subway Haliburton – Open 7 days from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. for takeout and remote order pickup only.

Glass Eagle Studios on Blairhampton Road – During the lockdown we will be open to sell our honey. Call Tom at 705-286-3628.

Contact North – Haliburton – Take advantage of online workplace and skills training, high school, post-secondary programming with support from Contact North in Haliburton. Help available at 1-855-867-9528 or www.studyonline.ca.

WRD Cottage Rental Agency – Still taking bookings and accepting cottage rentals for this 2021 Summer season. Call 705-457-9434.

Walkers Heating & Cooling – Open for 24/7 emergency service. Office closed to the public but we can be reached by calling 695-447-2375 or by emailing info@walkershvac.com.

John Francis Fuels – We continue to provide essential services but our office is closed. Contact us at 705-286-2738 or office@johnefrancisfuels.ca.

Studio Rose – Open. Our website has many things for pick up or shipping. Call 705-286-3383 or 705-754-5099 or at studiorosepottery.com.

Troy Optical – Open, please call for appointment. 705-286-0727 or troyoptical.com.

Highlands Storage – Available. Call 705-489-3925 or email info@highlands-storage.com for on-site office's business hours.

The Parish & Strano Real Estate Team – Open. Call 705-457-5485 for a no-charge property evaluation.

Lockside Trading Company – Online shopping, curbside pickup, delivery. Youngs Point & Haliburton open Mon-Sat. Contact lockside.com or shop@lockside.com or 1-888-714-0484.

Highlands Printing and Publishing – Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday. Email mountainside_farm@hotmail.com or call 705-489-2036. Not open for walk-ins.

Algonquin Cookhouse – Open take-out only, Tuesday-Sunday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Mondays. Harcourt, E Trail, 705-448-8868. Find us on Facebook.

Delancey Sports – Open Monday-Thursday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday-Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Offering curbside, online and delivery options. Call 705-455-9938, Email info@delanceysports.com or visit delanceysports.com

If you have updates on business hours and operations, please email them to admin@thehighlander.ca. They will be posted free of charge in the paper and online. To save space, please keep messages to 25 words. If you would like to place a larger ad to let people know you are open (or closed), please email sales@thehighlander.ca.

Highlander sports

The Interview: Matt Duchene

Highlander editor Lisa Gervais caught up with Nashville Predators' - and Haliburton native - Matt Duchene Jan. 15, the day after the Predators defeated the Columbus Blue Jackets 3-1 in their 2020-2021 season opener.

Q: How did you spend the off-season. Were you in Nashville? Canada?

A: We came back to Hali from mid-August until the start of October then headed back to Nashville. Our little girl, Jaymes, was born Nov. 9 so we needed to get back in advance of that.

Q: What was it like getting back to training camp ... what kind of off-season training were you able to do?

A: Off-season training was totally normal. I trained in my gym while I was at the cottage and skated in town and then when I got back here I was going to the rink during the week to train and skate. It was way too long of a period of time to not play hockey for our liking but it's great to be back.

Q: I think you played 15.27 minutes in the first game back. How were the legs? lungs?

A: Pretty light workload first game back. The minutes were pretty spread out around the lineup. Legs and lungs felt great! Was awesome to be back.

Q: How do you feel about the division format? Will you miss playing in Canada? However, good rivalry building in your division. Intensity should be up?

A: It's definitely a different year and will definitely miss playing in all the rinks this



Haliburton's Matt Duchene is back in action with the Nashville Predators, who kicked off their 2020-21 NHL season Jan. 14. *File.*

year but we will eventually have fans at a lot of our games here in Nashville and in other rinks in our division so that will be awesome ... also all the teams in our division have great weather so that's nice too.

Q: Big win first game out. How did it feel?

A: Awesome, was so nice to play hockey again and to get that first W feels great.

Q: Tell me about your line with Erik Haula and Luke Kunin.

A: I loved our line's first game. Definitely some areas to improve but finishing +1 and controlling the game when we were out there was a great start. It was our first game ever together as a line so only more good things to come.

Q: How do you think the team will do this season?

A: Love our team. We have a different vibe and feel than last year. Last year was a transition year for this franchise and I love what we did in the off-season. I'm excited to see what we do this year.

Q: Any personal goals?

A: Always lots of personal goals, but the biggest one is just to be the best I can be to help the team win.

Haliburton teen competes to be All-Round Champion

By Lisa Gervais

Haliburton teen, Evan Armstrong, will debut on the big screen when he appears in an episode of All-Round Champion on TVO Jan. 27.

In the series produced by Canadian entertainment company marbledmedia, each of the episodes features 10 of North America's most decorated young athletes competing in the ultimate competition in winter sports. The catch is they aren't competing in their own sport but in each other's.

Lianna Cohen of C2C Communication said, "Armstrong definitely has something to prove, as he is a multidisciplinary athlete. He's participated in soccer, basketball, volleyball, track and field, mountain biking, triathlons and cross-country skiing. He's always been skiing; however, he didn't start competing competitively until last year."

Evan, who is 15 and attends Lakefield College School, told *The Highlander* that being part of a TV production was quite a memorable experience.

"At times it was super fun but sadly it was also boring at times. One of the sayings in the TV show world is 'hurry up and wait' and is that ever true."

He added that he now knows how much

work and how many people go into creating a TV production.

"There are so many people involved in the filming of the show and a lot of others involved in behind-the-scenes stuff (advertising, editing, etc.)."

Evan said being in this type of TV show was fun and he met some amazing athletes and got to try new sports that he had always wanted to try.

He has already seen the production as it aired in the States earlier on BYUtv.

"I feel that it went well. There were a couple of embarrassing moments that ended up getting aired, which I am not very fond of but overall, it went well. With all the takes they took they have quite a few that turned out well," he said.

He said he thinks Haliburton County and other viewers should watch the show because it is an engaging competition show with an entertaining cast.

"It's really interesting to see how well kids can learn a new sport in just three days that they are unfamiliar with and then go on to compete in that sport. Although I have already seen the show once I will likely watch it again (especially the episode coming next week) because it is something that I really enjoyed filming and am interested in. I'm also excited for it to



Evan Armstrong on the cross-country ski trails. *Photo submitted.*

come out because I want to know what my friends and viewers, that haven't seen the show before, think of it."

Two-time Olympian and two-time world champion hurdler, Perdita Felicien, hosts the series, which also features some internationally-renowned guest mentors, including Olympic gold and silver medalist, Jennifer Heil, in freestyle skiing; Olympic gold medalist, Jamie Salé, in figure skating and Olympic gold medalist, Beckie Scott, in

cross-country skiing as well as many more.

Each episode features a guest Olympian judge who assists in the training, all while the contestants are scored on skill, sportsmanship and improvement.

At the end of the series, one of the remarkable young athletes will be crowned the All-Round Champion.

The series was filmed pre-pandemic last winter in Canada and is available to view through tvokids.com (*Lisa Gervais*)

ACTIVE LIVING



Aging Well Haliburton County is promoting safe walking. Flickr.

Aging Well promotes walking safely this winter

By Lisa Gervais

Carole Brown, a member of Aging Well Haliburton County, said she and other committee members have witnessed older adults falling while out and about in Haliburton County this winter.

Brown added one woman was walking in the vicinity of a local drug store wearing inappropriate footwear and no gloves.

"We need to educate again," Brown said of the committee's work.

She said in some cases older adults have not been able to travel to their southern homes this year due to COVID, and "a lot of people are not used to wintering.

"We just want to raise awareness for people to stay healthy," Brown said.

The committee has released a winter safety alert, including information on where people can purchase cleats during COVID-19 lockdowns.

The committee's Marjory Cartwright said this year's winter weather has created icy conditions that make driveways, parking lots, stairs and sidewalks hazardous.

Falls are the leading cause of injury among older Canadians, leading to 85 per cent of seniors' injury-related hospitalizations and 95 per cent of all hip fractures.

"But you don't need to be old to suffer a bad fall," Cartwright said.

They suggest that one way to limit the risk of a winter fall is to use boot and cane cleats when walking outdoors in icy conditions.

These are sharp metal strips that come on a flexible band. They are easy to take on and off and they can be firmly attached to boots.

There are also grips that can be attached to canes.

"A variety of these useful and reasonably priced aids can be purchased online and in a wide number of County retail outlets."

Cartwright said. "In the current lockdown, boot and cane grips can be ordered locally over the phone for curbside pickup. For sizing – try shoe size, or one size up if boot soles are very thick."

If you do fall, the committee suggests you try to land on your buttocks to prevent more serious injuries. Don't rush to get up. Make sure you are not injured before trying to get up or letting others help you get up. And, don't let the fear of falling again prevent you from being active since inactivity creates an even greater risk of falling.

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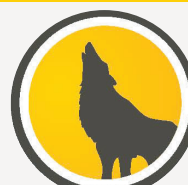
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ACTIVE LIVING



Stay-at-home except to play

Haliburton County residents are doing their best to stay at home during the most recent COVID-19 lockdown. It allows going out of doors for exercise, though, and Highlanders are taking advantage of the allowances and mild winter to date. While downhill skiing is not allowed at Sir Sam's Ski/Bike, cross-country skiing, ice fishing, snowmobiling and dog sledding can stay open, as long as the public and operators follow public health requirements. Outdoor skating rinks are also still permitted with restrictions in place. And, of course, walking remains a popular activity. (Lisa Gervais)

Top: Amanda Vlahaki and her daughter, Vaida, 3, cross-country ski at Twin Lakes Jan. 16. Bottom: Alina Conner flies down a hill at 12 Mile Beach Jan. 16. Photos by Lisa Gervais.

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OBITUARIES

William Ford Clapp



William (Bill) Ford Clapp, at age 90, passed away peacefully at home on Friday January 8th, surrounded by love until the end. He was born in Columbus, Ohio on October 30, 1930 to Milo Ford and Helen Peoples Clapp. Preceding him in death are his sister Sarah Reid, step-mother Helen Young, and step-brother Ivor Young. William (Papa Bill) will be deeply missed by his wife Nancy Hummel, 3 children Susan (Danny) Nolan, Alicia (Karl) Scholz, and Ford (Heather) Clapp. Bill was tremendously proud of his 6 grandchildren, Sarah, Christopher and Emily Nolan, Marie and Carson Scholz, Spencer Clapp and fondly remembered by his former wife, Judy.

Bill grew up in Columbus, Ohio, and attended Upper Arlington High School. He spent two years at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire and completed his undergraduate degree in Business at Ohio State University. In 1952 Bill joined the US NAVY Supply Corps during the Korean War and after training in the US he became a commissioned officer assigned to the second largest naval base in Japan. This was an experience that stayed with him his whole life. He was recognized for the Korean War Veterans cap he often wore, he learned some Japanese which he would teach to anyone willing to listen, "Anatano, jinsu no, mokuteikewa nandesuga?". And he forever loved all things Japanese - their art, furniture and food. After two years abroad he traveled home from Japan on the Canadian destroyer, the HMCS-Haida, which today sits in port in Hamilton, Ontario. He took tremendous pride in taking his son and 3 grandsons to visit this historic site and important chapter in his life.

Bill's passion for learning and teaching led him to universities in Berkeley, California and Boulder, Colorado where he studied Psychology and then to Reno, Nevada where he taught Psychology at the University of Nevada. In 1970, with three children and wife Judy, Bill moved his family to Toronto where he had accepted a position as Chief Psychologist at Thistletown Regional Centre working with children and later at the Muskoka Centre in Gravenhurst.

Bill was active in sports of all kinds throughout his life from swimming, football and golf in high school to sailing, rollerblading and of course tennis which he loved most and played (and won at) into his 80's.

Bill also loved to travel and did it extensively with his wife Nancy. Bill followed Nancy for months-long stays where she was working as a travelling nurse in Florida, Hawaii, and the Virgin Islands (where they lived on a boat). Together they saw Russia, China, Greece, Croatia to name a few. Dad was happiest when he was on-the-move to places new and exciting. The stories and adventures are endless. Recounting them often left us in awe or laughing with tears.

Bill was fun loving, full of life and always talking to people; keen to uncover some interesting information or strike up a friendship. Flea Markets were his favourite "go-to" place. If he found a deal he would buy a dozen (red shorts) regardless if he needed it or not.

Bill never feared death or dying so perhaps he has just moved on again to some place new and exciting. We will forever hold him close to our hearts and will miss his smiling face every day.



In Loving Memory of Aileen Mary Brown (nee Watson)

Born in Kinmount, Ontario on April 27, 1922 and quietly passed away at Caressant Care, McLaughlin in Lindsay, Ontario on January 18, 2021 in her 99th year.

Daughter of the late Herbert and Marg Watson. Predeceased by her husband George Brown (2005). Dear mother of Joan (Dave) Parton, Barb (Doug) Meagher, Marg (the late Gerry) Luke, the late Len (2014)(Carol) Brown, Gloria (John) Clarke, Angus (Anthea) Brown, Kevin Brown and predeceased by her infant daughter Rosemary. Loving grandmother of many grandchildren, great grandchildren and great great grandchildren. Also predeceased by her brother Joe Watson and by her sister Lorraine Barker. Loving remembered and will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

In keeping with Aileen's wishes, cremation has taken place. A celebration of her life and interment at St. Patrick's Catholic Church Cemetery, Kinmount will be held at a later date.

Memorial Donations to the Sick Children's Hospital, Cystic Fibrosis or to a charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.



IN MEMORY



Don Hall From Minden

In loving memory of a wonderful Husband, Father, Gramps and Best Friend who left us January 19, 2011.

This day is remembered and quietly kept,
No words are needed, we shall never forget,
For those we love don't go away,
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen and unheard, but always near,
So loved, so missed, and so very dear.

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or mail to P.O. Box 534, Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0

Only successful applicants will be contacted.

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Must be available for on call and weekends.

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Mary Sisson, Youth Wellness Hub Manager
marys@pointintime.ca

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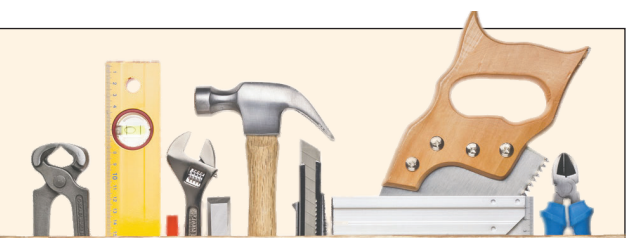


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Highlander puzzles

One Hump or Two?

by Barbara Olson
© ClassiCanadian Crosswords

Across

- 1 Completely wrecks the wheels
- 7 Drifting bit of smoke
- 11 Three-item Subway sub
- 14 Shortly, shortly
- 15 Davis's drooling dog
- 16 ___ Speedwagon
- 17 "My lips are sealed," in a convent?
- 19 H-shaped Greek letter
- 20 "___ silly question, ..."
- 21 CBC film critic Glasner
- 22 Nervous polygraph testees, maybe
- 24 High-visibility coat that's less effective?
- 28 Yucatán year
- 31 Add-ons to would or wanna
- 32 Buenos ___
- 33 Birthing assistant
- 35 Sis or bro
- 36 Maid of the ___ (Niagara Falls boat)
- 39 Harley-riding grannies?
- 43 Viking "cheers," and a vodka brand
- 44 "Whad'ja say?"
- 45 Like a brew pub's brew
- 46 Dance wildly, say
- 48 "Where did ___ wrong?"
- 50 Maternity ward VIPs
- 51 Web-surfing goose of Hawaii?
- 55 They may be over one's head
- 56 New newt
- 57 Some diag. tests
- 61 Kwik-E-Mart owner of TV
- 62 Like an ecstatic silent performer?
- 66 Big mo. for calendar sales
- 67 Young with an "Old Man" song
- 68 Mental makeup
- 69 E-cigarette's lack
- 70 Alter, as public opinion
- 71 "Already?"

Down

- 1 Funny Fey
- 2 Legal responsibility
- 3 Bomb bigtime
- 4 Equally tearjerking
- 5 Cave to cajolement, maybe
- 6 It's usually a bad idea
- 7 Cry of wide-eyed wonder
- 8 "It's just what ___"
- 9 Knight's address
- 10 One with wares to sell
- 11 Belts out suddenly, with "song"
- 12 Just over a yard
- 13 Brown bread?
- 18 Shady street liners
- 23 One with a cool delivery, once
- 25 Flanged support beam
- 26 Oil transport option
- 27 Be in line with
- 28 Top naval ranks: Abbr.
- 29 Snug spot for breakfast
- 30 Not up on the latest
- 34 Hung out in a hammock
- 35 Principal bldg.?
- 37 Maker of Seinfeld's car
- 38 5-ml. measures
- 40 Big part of a Brian Mulroney caricature
- 41 Festive tide
- 42 Hands-up time?
- 47 Results of a burning desire?
- 48 The deets
- 49 Outlandish outfits
- 51 "If ___ million dollars ..."
- 52 Casual refusals
- 53 London tube?
- 54 U.S. TV awards
- 58 Like a moneybags, in Mexico
- 59 POV prelude, in texts
- 60 Like a satisfied attention-seeker
- 63 Freshly-hired
- 64 U.S. counterpart to CSIS
- 65 U.K. mil. honour

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